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**OFFICE OF PETITIONS**

In re Application of	:	
Joan D. Leonard, et al.	:	
Application No. 10/825,391	:	DECISION ON PETITION
Filed: April 14, 2004	:	UNDER 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3)
Attorney Docket No. 12780/103	:	

This is a decision on the petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3), filed on August 21, 2007, to accept an unintentionally delayed claim under 35 U.S.C. § 120 for the benefit of priority to the prior-filed nonprovisional application set forth in the amendment filed March 7, 2005, using a certificate of mailing dated March 2, 2005.

The petition is **DISMISSED**.

A petition for acceptance of a claim for late priority under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) is only applicable to those applications filed on or after November 29, 2000. Further, the petition is appropriate only after the expiration of the period specified in 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii). In addition, the petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) must be accompanied by:

- (1) the reference required by 35 U.S.C. § 120 and 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(i) and (iii) of the prior-filed application, unless previously submitted;
- (2) the surcharge set forth in § 1.17(t); and
- (3) a statement that the entire delay between the date the claim was due under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii) and the date the claim was filed was unintentional. The Director may require additional information where there is a question whether the delay was unintentional.

The petition does not satisfy items (1) above.

The reference to add the above-noted, prior-filed application on page one following the first sentence of the specification is not acceptable as drafted since it improperly incorporates by reference the prior-filed application. An incorporation by reference statement added after an application's filing date is not effective because no new matter can be added to an application after its filing date (*see* 35 U.S.C. § 132(a)). If an incorporation by reference statement is included in an

amendment to the specification to add a benefit claim under 35 U.S.C. § 120 after the filing date of the application, the amendment would not be proper. When a benefit claim under 35 U.S.C. § 120 is submitted after the filing of an application, the reference to the prior application cannot include an incorporation by reference statement of the prior application. See Dart Industries v. Banner, 636 F.2d 684, 207 USPQ 273 (C.A.D.C. 1980). Note MPEP §§ 201.06(c) and 608.04(b).

Before the petition under 37 CFR § 1.78(a)(3) can be granted, a renewed petition and an Application Data Sheet or an amendment (complying with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.121 and 37 CFR 1.76(b)(5)) to correct the above matters are required.

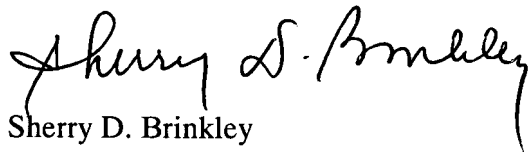
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Telephone inquiries concerning this decision should be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-3204.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sherry D. Brinkley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sherry" being more prominent.

Sherry D. Brinkley  
Petitions Examiner  
Office of Petitions